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NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS
COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARTIES INCLUDED IN ANNEX I TO THE CONVENTION

In-depth reviews of first and second national communications and scheduling for future communications

Note by the secretariat

I. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

1. The present note describes the status of in-depth reviews of first national communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, and contains the schedule for in-depth reviews of second national communications in 1998 as well as considerations regarding the scheduling of further communications.

2. All Annex I Parties have submitted their first national communication. The secretariat has conducted in-depth reviews of all first national communications, except those from Belgium, Lithuania and Ukraine. Belgium (due date 15 October 1996) submitted its first communication on 21 March 1997, and an update equivalent to the second communication on 21 August 1997; it is envisaged to review both these communications in early 1999. Lithuania (due date 22 December 1995) submitted its first communication on 21 March 1998. Ukraine (due date 13 February 1998) submitted its first communication on 16 February 1998. It is envisaged that both first and second communications from Lithuania and Ukraine will be reviewed together some time in 1999. At the time of preparation of this note, 32 country visits had taken place in connection with the in-depth reviews of first national communications and 29 in-depth review

reports had been issued, with the remaining three to be issued before the eighth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). The secretariat has therefore, with a few exceptions as outlined above, concluded the reviews of the first national communications from Annex I Parties.

3. Table 1 in this document provides detailed information on the status of reviews of first national communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, namely the dates on which the first national communications were due and the dates on which they were received, the dates of in-depth review country visits, and the dates of the publication of in-depth review reports.

4. In accordance with decision 2/CP.1[1] of the Conference of the Parties (COP), summaries of the reports of the in-depth reviews of first national communications are made available to all Parties and accredited observers. These summaries are one to four pages in length and are available in the six official languages of the United Nations. The full texts of the reports are available in their original language. These reports including their summaries are also accessible on-line via the World Wide Web. They bear the symbol FCCC/IDR.1/country code; the summaries bear corresponding codes FCCC/IDR.1(SUM)/country code.

5. The COP 2, by its decision 9/CP.2,[2] requested Annex I Parties to submit their second national communication by 15 April 1997. For those Parties which were due to submit the first communication in 1996, an update of this communication was to be submitted by the same date; second national communications by Parties with economies in transition were in principle to be submitted not later than 15 April 1998. National inventory data on emissions by sources and removals by sinks are to be submitted on an annual basis by 15 April of each year. The annex to this decision also contains revised guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Annex I Parties (UNFCCC guidelines) which were used by them when preparing the second communications.

6. Table 2 in this document provides information on the status of submission of second national communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, and the schedule of their in-depth reviews for 1998. The schedule for 1999 will be prepared once remaining communications, which were due by 15 April 1998, have been received. This schedule will also have to include reviews of national communications from Croatia, Liechtenstein, Monaco and Slovenia which have been added to Annex I by decision 4/CP.3.[3]

7. According to decisions of the Conference of the Parties, 500 copies of national communications are to be submitted to the secretariat for subsequent distribution, as well as an

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[1] For decisions of the COP at its first session, see document FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1.

[2] For decisions of the COP at its second session, see document FCCC/CP/1996/15/Add.1.

[3] For decisions of the COP at its third session, see document FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1 .

electronic version of an executive summary of the national communication. The secretariat has made available the full texts of the majority of the first and some of the second national communications from Annex I Parties on its World Wide Web site (http://www.unfccc.de). The remaining communications will be made available on the Web as soon as their electronic versions are received by the secretariat.

8. It is worth noting that some Annex II Parties have made an additional financial effort with the aim of funding the participation of more experts from non-Annex I Parties in the in-depth reviews which is supplementary to the normal practice of funding one non-Annex I expert and one expert from countries with economies in transition. Switzerland was the first Annex II Party to make a voluntary contribution which would allow the secretariat to fund in total three to four additional experts from non-Annex I Parties to participate in the in-depth reviews of second national communications. Canada and Sweden have also informed the secretariat of their intention to do so.

II. SCHEDULING FOR SUBMISSION OF SUBSEQUENT NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM ANNEX I PARTIES

9. The dates for submission of first and second national communications from Annex I Parties were established respectively by Article 12.5 of the Convention and by the second session of the Conference of the Parties. No dates for submission of third and subsequent communications by these Parties have been established so far. National inventory data in accordance with decision 9/CP.2 are to be submitted by all Annex I Parties on an annual basis, and this practice will be continued under the Kyoto Protocol, in accordance with its Articles 7.1 and 7.3.

10. Since the Kyoto Protocol adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its third session includes a communication and review process in its Articles 7 and 8 which is integrated with that under the Convention, it would seem advisable to start consideration of the possible schedule for submission of subsequent national communications taking into account some milestone dates contained in the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. The approaches suggested below are intended to initiate the discussion aimed at facilitating planning for the preparation of future national communications by Annex I Parties and at adopting a decision on the scheduling at the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties. When considering the scheduling it would be advisable to take into account any possible work on the revision of the guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Annex I Parties (UNFCCC guidelines), (see FCCC/SBSTA/1998/3).

11. One possible approach could be to maintain the present frequency of submissions, i.e. every 2.5 to 3 years. This would mean that third national communications would be due at the end of 1999, with an extension to the end of e.g. 2000 for Parties with economies in transition, (EITs), and the subsequent ones in 2002/2003, etc. An advantage would be that frequent updates of information would be made available to all Parties. Disadvantages would be different dates for submission by Annex II and EIT countries, which complicates comparability of information;

possible repetitions in such sections as policies and measures where major changes are generally infrequent; and the reporting burden.

12. Another possible approach could be based on a somewhat lower frequency, but with dates common to all Annex I Parties. For example, third national communications from Annex I Parties could be due in 2001, with subsequent communications due in 2005, 2009, and 2013 (although the latter two dates are probably too far in the future to be decided upon at this time). Advantages seem to be that the dates as suggested would correspond to some major milestones of both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. The third communication, if submitted in 2001, would allow Annex I Parties to provide information on the results of their efforts aimed at returning greenhouse gas emissions to their 1990 levels by 2000, in accordance with Articles 4.2(a) and (b) of the Convention. The fourth communication, if submitted in 2005, would provide an opportunity to report on demonstrable progress achieved in fulfilment of Annex I Parties' commitments in accordance with Article 3.2 of the Kyoto Protocol, and facilitate consideration of commitments for subsequent commitment periods as stipulated in Article 3.9 of the Kyoto Protocol. The subsequent, fifth and sixth, communications would immediately follow, respectively, the start and the end of the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol.

13. Despite the fact that annual submission of national inventory data would allow for continuous reporting of emissions and removals of greenhouse gases, suggested periods between submission of national communications may appear excessively long, which can be regarded as a disadvantage of this approach. It could be suggested therefore that in between the submission of full national communications, Annex I Parties would provide the secretariat with information on specific areas designated by the COP, such as, for example, the main policies and measures to mitigate climate change, projections (including effects of individual measures), transfer of technologies, implementation of Article 6 of the Convention, and provision of financial and technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties. To ease the reporting burden on Annex I Parties this interim information could be submitted to the secretariat in electronic form (possibly by filling on-line forms to be made available on the secretariat's Web page) and using agreed tabular formats, such as those contained in annexes to the UNFCCC guidelines, which could be amended as appropriate. The secretariat would compile and analyse this information and publish it as official UNFCCC documents in addition to in-depth review and compilation and synthesis reports.

III. POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE SBI

14. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation may wish to perform a general assessment of the results of the in-depth reviews of first national communications and the utility of the process from the point of view of the implementation of the Convention. It may also wish to take note of the status of submission of second national communications and the schedule for in-depth reviews of these communications in 1998. The SBI may wish to endorse the initiative of some Annex II Parties aimed at enlarging the participation of experts from non-Annex I Parties in in-depth reviews, and invite other Parties to take similar action.

15. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation may wish to initiate the discussion on the suggested approaches for scheduling of submission of third and subsequent national communications by Annex I Parties with the aim of adopting a corresponding decision by the Conference of the Parties at its next session.

Table 1. First national communications: Status of reviews

Annex I Party	Communication due date	Communication received date	Review visit dates	Report date
Australia	21.09.94	19.09.94	26-30.06.95	14.12.95
Austria	29.11.94	23.09.94	04-07.12.95	10.12.96
Belgium	15.10.96	21.03.97	-	-
Bulgaria	10.02.96	11.03.96	01-04.10.96	May 1998
Canada	21.09.94	07.02.94	29.05-02.06.95	21.02.96
Czech Republic	21.09.94	17.10.94	02-05.05.95	30.10.95
Denmark	21.09.94	01.09.94	14-18.08.95	06.12.96
E.C.	21.09.94	08.07.96	10-15.11.96	15.07.97
Estonia	25.04.95	06.05.95	16-17.05.96	14.05.97
Finland	01.02.95	30.01.95	29.1-02.02.96	10.12.96
France	23.12.94	06.02.95	17-21.06.96	11.02.98
Germany	21.09.94	28.09.94	20-24.11.95	18.07.97
Greece	02.05.95	23.03.95	08-11.04.97	May 1998
Hungary	25.11.94	22.11.94	24-29.11.96	24.07.97
Iceland	21.09.94	04.03.96	09-13.09.96	30.01.97
Ireland	19.01.95	15.11.94	29.01-02.02.96	04.12.96
Italy	14.01.95	04.04.95	11-15.11.96	12.06.97
Japan	21.09.94	20.09.94	03-07.07.95	28.06.96
Latvia	21.12.95	20.09.95	13-14.05.96	24.02.97
Lithuania	22.12.95	21.03.98	-	-
Luxembourg	07.02.95	25.03.96	13-16.11.96	16.10.97
Netherlands	21.09.94	20.09.94	20-24.11.95	31.07.96

Table 1 (*continued*)

Annex I Party	Communication due date	Communication received date	Review visit dates	Report date
New Zealand	21.09.94	21.09.94	03-07.07.95	12.06.96
Norway	21.09.94	21.09.94	23-27.10.95	03.07.96
Poland	26.04.95	02.02.95	25-29.03.96	May 1998
Portugal	21.09.94	25.01.95	09-13.09.96	04.12.96
Romania	06.03.95	14.03.95	07-11.10.96	04.09.97
Russian Federation	28.09.95	05.12.95	22-26.04.96	05.06.97
Slovakia	24.05.95	11.10.95	02-06.06.96	05.06.97
Spain	s21.09.94	28.09.94	25-29.09.95	10.07.96
Sweden	21.09.94	20.09.94	13-17.03.95	11.12.95
Switzerland	21.09.94	21.09.94	11-14.09.95	27.02.96
Ukraine	13.02.98	16.02.98	-	-
United Kingdom	21.09.94	07.02.94	09-13.10.95	24.02.97
United States of America	21.09.94	21.09.94	22-26.05.95	26.02.96
Liechtenstein★	22.03.95	24.02.95	-	-
Monaco ★	21.09.94	25.10.94	-	-

★ As stipulated in Article 4.2(g) of the Convention, any Party not included in Annex I may, in its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, or at any time thereafter, notify the Depositary that it intends to be bound by subparagraphs (a) and (b) of Article 4.2. Monaco notified the Depositary of its intention to be bound by these subparagraphs on 24 November 1992. Liechtenstein has not notified the Depositary of its intention to be bound by these subparagraphs.

Table 2. Second national communications: Status of submission as of 21 April 1998 and schedule for review

Annex I Party	Communication due date	Communication received date	Review visit dates	Notes
Australia	15.04.97	04.12.97	07-11.10.98	Confirmed
Austria	15.04.97	31.07.97	30.03-03.04.98	Visit done
Belgium	15.04.97	21.08.97	Early 1999	
Bulgaria	15.04.98	-	1999	
Canada	15.04.97	05.05.97	11-15.05.98	Confirmed
Czech Republic	15.04.98	06.08.97	05-09.10.98	Confirmed
Denmark	15.04.97	05.12.97	21-25.09.98	Confirmed
E.C.	15.04.97	-	1999	
Estonia	15.04.98	31.03.98	1999	
Finland	15.04.97	15.04.97	11-15.05.98	Confirmed
France	15.04.97	12.06.97	23-27.03.98	Visit done
Germany	15.04.97	16.04.97	16-20.02.98	Visit done
Greece	15.04.97	12.12.97	Early 1999	
Hungary	15.04.98	01.12.97	1999	
Iceland	15.04.97	06.08.97	14-18.09.98	Tentative
Ireland	15.04.97	08.07.97	05-08.05.98	Confirmed
Italy	15.04.97	27.03.98	To be determined	Excerpt from NC received
Japan	15.04.97	02.12.97	30.11-04.12.98	Confirmed
Latvia	15.04.98	-	1999	
Lithuania	15.04.98	-	1999	
Luxembourg	15.04.97	-	Late 1998	Tentative
Netherlands	15.04.97	14.04.97	28.09-02.10.98	Confirmed

Table 2 (*continued*)

Annex I Party	Communication due date	Communication received date	Review visit dates	Notes
New Zealand	15.04.97	27.05.97	31.08-04.09.98	Confirmed
Norway	15.04.97	16.04.97	05-09.10.98	Confirmed
Poland	15.04.98	-	1999	
Portugal	15.04.97	26.11.97	18-22.05.98	Confirmed
Romania	15.04.98	-	1999	
Russian Federation	15.04.98	-	1999	
Slovakia	15.04.98	06.08.97	14-17.04.98	Visit done
Spain	15.04.97	22.11.97	To be determined	
Sweden	15.04.97	05.05.97	30.03-03.04.98	Visit done
Switzerland	15.04.97	21.04.97	10-13.03.98	Visit done
Ukraine	15.04.98 ?	-	1999	First NC received in February 1998
United Kingdom	15.04.97	13.02.97	07-11.12.98	Confirmed
United States of America	15.04.97	11.08.97	20-24.04.98	Visit done

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